

SIERRA NEVADA CONSERVANCY
PUBLIC WORKSHOP
SUSANVILLE, CA
APRIL 11, 2007

PROGRAM GUIDELINES
QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. **The Tourism and Recreation program area should include the development and promotion of hunting and fishing access.**
2. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 6, "Program Areas Defined": Suggest that the SNC also promote non-consumptive uses of fish and wildlife resources such as bird-watching or photography.**
3. Regarding working landscapes, is support for incentives available to achieve natural resource protection? Examples of such incentives are the Natural Resource Conservation Service's Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program and Environmental Quality Incentives Program.
4. The SNC's requirement for perpetual easements is really restrictive. Could SNC partner or consult with the Natural Resource Conservation Service's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) on this? The CRP is part of the Farm Bill, and has a ten-year lease program.
5. What is your definition of "recognized tribes"?
6. **Regarding page 10, "Public Use of Public Land": Would like to include the idea of protecting private lands that include viewsheds that are part of public land, i.e. that protect views from public land.**
7. **Something I don't see in the Working Landscape program area is an acknowledgement that working landscapes can run into conflicts with other uses. Efforts to form coalitions to address conflicts between land uses or land management techniques would be good.**
8. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 6, "Tourism and Recreation": This should include destination athletic events, such as marathons, that are important to the economy. Page 10, "Assist the Regional Economy" refers to job fairs and training, but should also include ways to support entrepreneurs who have businesses related to the beauty of the Sierra.**
9. **There has been some good work done on the Modoc Line. The program areas should include something to identify rail corridors specifically, such as the one from town to Ravendale.**
10. In the small rural areas it takes a lot of political will to deal with rail corridors; great for SNC to help.
11. **Transportation services should be endorsed as a benefit for rural tourism.** For example, there is a shuttle to help people ride the Bizz Johnson trail. It only runs one weekend per month right now, but could run more frequently.

12. **The Tourism and Recreation program area should include some ability to coordinate tourism activities throughout the region, such as is done at Apple Hill.**
13. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 8, "Reduce the Risk of Natural Disasters": The focus seems to be on wildfire. It would be good to also include an increase in floodplain capacity, the reduction of flood risks, and riparian restoration. The activities relative to reduction of fire risk should include the management of invasive weeds and juniper.**
14. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 9, "Water and Air Quality", sub-bullet 5: Suggest inserting "upland" so that line reads "wetland, meadow, and upland restoration".**
15. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 7, "Tourism and Recreation", second set of sub-bullets, sub-bullet 2, "Assistance with trails": Does that include development and management? It should.**
16. **A frequent problem with grants is inflexible deadlines. With the Strategic Opportunity Grants (SOGs), it looks like you've already considered that. This is really important, and I want to reinforce that.**
17. **What is the SOG funding source?**
18. **I see that appraisal services are included in the SOGs; it would be good to broaden that to include other transaction costs, particularly for land trusts.**
19. **I understand that no funding is available to private businesses. Is the idea for funding to go to land trusts to allow them to contract out to private businesses? How to allow for consulting?**
20. **So the SNC would not be involved in long-term management of land? Is the SNC able to establish endowments for management of land acquired through your grants?**
21. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 15, "Eligible Applicants": This is a little unclear. The first line refers to "public agencies" and the first indented section to "local public agencies". How about federal agencies, are they included?**
22. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 17, "Cost-effectiveness": For a land trust there are regional distribution implications relative to the choice between protecting important land under threat vs. land that you can afford. There are vast differences in land values throughout the region and these should be considered.**
23. **Regarding management and maintenance of a conservation easement, does that require reversionary rights for stewardship and maintenance similar to the Wildlife Conservation Board?**
24. **Regarding Program Guidelines, page 16, "Project Evaluation": Do you want any consideration of the return on investment relative to its financial benefit to the community? It might provide more incentive for creativity.**
25. **Regarding page 16, "Project Evaluation": An applicant's record of past performance could be an evaluation criteria.**

GRANT GUIDELINES QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. There is a need for resource-based economic development to support the economic viability of working landscapes. Is funding available for that?
2. Would funding be available for a private business that promotes a tourism service such as bus shuttles?
3. I'm confused between the first nine million dollars that's region-wide and the two million dollars that's for projects of region-wide significance. For example, the juniper of northeastern California is probably not of region-wide significance?
4. **Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 2, "Eligible Projects," item 4, bullet 2: "Invasive" might be a better term than "exotic".** Some native species can really take over; "invasive" is more inclusive.
5. **Regarding page 2, "Eligible Projects", the bulleted list following item 4: Most items are particular issues important in terms of restoration or protection. Prescribed burning is more of a tool rather than oriented towards protection and restoration.**
6. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 2, "Eligible Projects", bullet 5: Wondering where the connection to Prop. 84 is with trails – I guess that makes sense if you have a problem trail.
7. **Comment from Bob Kirkwood, SNC Board Member regarding comment 5 above: I'm not sure that road or trail "elimination" ensures they're restored in a way that doesn't create an erosion hazard or a habitat problem. Maybe "decommissioning" is better (federal term).**
8. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 2, "Eligible Projects": I don't see language related to water resources such as protection from transfer outside the basin, lowering in-stream water temperatures to improve habitat, or increasing irrigation efficiency. These seem more land-based.
9. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 9, "Cost-Effectiveness": This is not very specific about matching funds requirements. What would be required for a match?
10. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 7, "Land and Water Benefits": Is it the intention to emphasize water over land? It sounds like that's the focus. How would that affect the ranking of a land-based project?
11. Regarding acquisitions, is it possible to use Prop. 84 funds to pay off bridge loans that are used to help land be acquired quickly? It should be. There is no mention here of paying off interim financing. (This comment was seconded by another party.)
12. **Comment from Bob Kirkwood, SNC Board Member regarding Grant Guidelines, page 3, "Eligible Costs": We're disallowing overhead, which is the most difficult money for nonprofits to find. Is there a reason that we can't consider allowing a modest portion of the grant for overhead? This might be something to have in the evaluation criteria**

- instead of prohibiting.** The criteria could be based on percentage, for example an applicant who had a twenty percent overhead rate would score less on this criterion than an applicant with a lower rate.
13. Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 8, "Eligible Costs": I see that employee salaries that are not directly related to a project are disallowed. Are direct salaries eligible, say staff time that is directly accounted for, like site visits, etc.?
 14. **Comment from Brian Dahle, SNC Board Member: How about a cap on the allowable percentage for administration?**
 15. **Regarding Grant Guidelines, page 8, "Implementability": Do you have a sense of the time frames required?** I'd like to encourage flexibility on this; with partnerships a lot of time can be used for coordination and things seem to take longer than they should.
 16. Is there money available through SOGs to start a networking group on cooperative projects within the subregion, get people talking and working together?
 17. The Lassen County General Plan includes a goal of creating a wildlife resource management plan. The Fish and Game Commission is trying to get the process started. Is that something that might fit with the Prop. 84 Guidelines?
 18. **I have heard a lot of horror stories about the State not being able to give out advances for grants (Prop. 40, for example) – you're cognizant of that?**
 19. **When bidding on a restoration project, bidders know where the funding is coming from and their prices will be higher if they know that they are going to be strung out for six months. SNC should consider this.** Federal agencies can pay quickly and give advances.
 20. **Recommend that the Request for Proposal guidelines have a page limit on applications, good for those who prepare applications and those who read them.**
 21. **Have you considered an on-line application form? That will limit the application right there.**

OTHER QUESTIONS AND COMMENTS

1. Over time I hope that the SNC can report back on its progress, both for your overall ability to report to the legislature as well as the ability to say you did what you said you were going to do.
2. The State pays a lot of money in interest due to its "slow pay" issues.
3. When you start going into other counties, there's a wide variety of players. Is there the possibility to create a directory on the web of people who have attended these workshops so people can know who possible contacts/partners in an area may be?

4. The California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection says that they have a lot of money that they are charged to administer from the federal government.
5. Are there other sources of funds that the SNC might receive for recreation projects? The local Bureau of Land Management office is interested in a 20-year Resource Management Plan, also trails and rural tourism.
6. Comment from Bob Kirkwood, SNC Board Member: It would be useful for the SNC to know about Sierra grant requests that are going in to other agencies.
7. I'm a retired federal land manager. Other traditional funding sources don't play out well in local rural communities due to the lack of a population base and political voice. I hope that the SNC will recognize that and accommodate it. It would be nice to have that advocacy.
8. The time that the SNC has put into Lassen County so far outshadows the population.
9. Comment from Brian Dahle, SNC Board Member: I hope that the SNC can work with other State agencies to help them see the realities of the Sierra.
10. The rules that others in the state have to play with apply to us whether they truly apply or not. Advocacy on the part of the SNC can really benefit rural counties; they're so far removed from Sacramento. We want the SNC region to be attractive to California residents who don't want the nonsense of the urban center.
11. The SNC should also consult with the Economic Development Council.

SUBREGIONAL ISSUES RAISED

1. Tourism and recreation
2. Working landscapes
3. Public use of public land
4. Regional economy
5. Reduce risk of natural disasters
6. Water quality and resources
7. Land management and maintenance
8. Invasive weeds